

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**GOV. EASLEY SENDS DAMAGE ASSESSMENT TEAMS TO WESTERN N.C.**  
*Teams to Determine if State Assistance is Needed*

**RALEIGH** - Gov. Mike Easley today sent damage assessment teams to five western North Carolina counties following Monday and Tuesday's severe wind storms. Four teams of emergency management personnel will assess storm damage to both public and private properties in Alexander, Caldwell, Macon, McDowell and Polk counties.

"Western North Carolina was hit hard by near-tropical force winds, and depending on the findings of these disaster assessment teams, the state may be able to help with financial aid," said Easley.

At the governor's direction, the N.C. Division of Emergency Management is deploying two Public Assistance Preliminary Damage Assessment Teams and two Individual Assistance Preliminary Damage Assessment Teams. The public assistance teams will be looking at such things as the cost of debris removal and damage to government buildings and property. The individual assistance teams will assess damage done to private property including whether private insurance will cover the costs.

Once assessment figures are gathered, the state will be able to determine eligibility for assistance. That would likely happen early next week.

Currently, Duke Energy is working in nearly two dozen counties, mostly in the western part of the state, to restore power to about 45,000 customers. Counties with the highest number of outages today are Henderson, McDowell, Rutherford, Transylvania, Caldwell and Burke counties. A shelter in Henderson County may close today depending on whether or not power is restored and evacuees can return safely to their homes.

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